

Message Text

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44

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 AGR-05 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 SS-15 NSC-05 SP-02 L-03 H-02 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 COME-00 STR-04 OMB-01 LAB-04 TRSE-00 CIEP-01

FRB-03 IO-10 /076 W

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O R 191953Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2486

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

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PASS FAS AGRICULTURE

EO: 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD EAGR

SUBJ: ALLEGED COFFEE CROP DAMAGE

REF: STATE 297411

1. ALTHOUGH COLOMBIAN PRESS HAS REPORTED SPORADICALLY ON LOCALIZED DAMAGE TO COFFEE CROP DUE TO HEAVY WINTER RAINS, NEITHER PRESS NOR COFFEE FEDERATION OFFICIALS ARE ESTIMATING APPRECIABLE DOWN-TURN TO TOTAL 1975-76 CROP. IN OUR MID-NOVEMBER 1975 COFFEE REPORT TO FAS (CO5053) WE REPORTED AN EXPECTED REDUCTION IN COLOMBIAN COFFEE PRODUCTION FOR CURRENT CROP YEAR DUE TO DOWNWARD CYCLE IN YIELDS TO 8.5 MILLION BAGS. ALSO NOVEMBER RAINS WERE HAMPERING HARVESTING OF BEANS TO MARKET.

2. IN AGATT DISCUSSIONS WITH COFFEE GROWERS FEDERATION (CGF) DECEMBER 18, MANAGER GOMEZ JARAMILLO OPINED U.S. PRESS HAD PICKED UP LOCALIZED COLOMBIAN NEWSPAPER REPORTS AND PROBABLY EXAGGERATED

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EXTENT OF DAMAGE TO TOTAL COLOMBIAN COFFEE CROP. CGF HAS NOT AL-

TERED ITS 8.5 MILLION BAG PRODUCTION FIGURE FOR 1975-76. GOMEZ JARAMILLO FEELS IT IS PREMATURE TO EVALUATE EXTENT OF WINTER RAIN DAMAGES AT THIS TIME.

3. COLOMBIAN CROP YEAR RUNS OCTOBER 1 TO SEPTEMBER 30. ACCORDING TO GOMEZ JARAMILLO 2.5 MILLION BAGS ALREADY HAVE MOVED TO MARKET DURING OCTOBER 1 TO DECEMBER 15, 1975. RECENT HEAVY WINTER RAINS NOT EXPECTED TO HAVE MAJOR EFFECT ON OCTOBER TO MARCH HARVEST (FIRST HALF YEAR). RAINS MAY AFFECT HARVEST SECOND HALF YEAR BEGINNING MAY 1976 DUE TO DAMAGE FLOWER FORMATION. MOREOVER, BECAUSE OF HIGH FERTILIZER PRICES THROUGH SUMMER 1975 APPLICATIONS WERE NOT SUFFICIENT WHICH WILL MEAN LOWER PRODUCTION SECOND HALF CROP YEAR. GOMEZ JARAMILLO FELT EXTENT OF COFFEE DAMAGE NOT MORE THAN 10 PERCENT FOR SECOND HALF CROP YEAR. IF SUCH IS CASE, WE ESTIMATE TOTAL HARVEST CROP YEAR WILL NOT GO BELOW 8.1 MILLION BAGS.

4. INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY GOMEZ JARAMILLO CONFIRMS THAT SUPPLIED BY LEADING COLOMBIAN COFFEE TRADER. EMBASSY ALSO WAS TOLD COLOMBIAN GROWERS STIING ON COFFEE STOCKS HOPING FOR EVEN HIGHER INTERNATIONAL PRICES.

5. GOMEZ JARAMILLO SAID CGF TECHNICIANS WOULD BE ASSESSING COFFEE SITUATION IN JANUARY 1976. WE WILL BE IN CONTACT WITH HIM AGAIN IN MID-JANUARY AND REPORT ON ANY NEW DEVELOPMENTS.

6. FOLLOWING CURRENT CROP YEAR DOWNWARD CYCLE IN YIELDS, COLOMBIAN COFFEE PRODUCTION EXPECTED TO GRADUALLY INCREASE NEXT THREE YEARS. WITH RECENT DECREASE IN FERTILIZER PRICES AND FAVORABLE WORLD COFFEE PRICES, GOC INTERESTED IN INTENSIFYING PRODUCTION. CURRENT RAINS NOT EXPECTED TO AFFECT THIS PROJECTION.
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